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Cuba

The assurances against invasion which this government undertook to give in my letter of October 27th are governed by certain carefully stated conditions which are well understood by the Soviet Government. These conditions are that offensive weapons systems should be removed from Cuba and that there should be appropriate observation, supervision, and safeguards to make sure that they have gone and that no more come back. These conditions have not yet been met, and in their absence there cannot be any formal assurances under the terms of the letter of October 27th.

But the fact is that we do not want to be forced to invade Cuba, and have no intention of invading Cuba, ~~as long as other and better courses can be found to protect the peace and security of the Caribbean area.~~ As I said on September 13, "we shall neither initiate nor permit aggression in this hemisphere." If offensive weapons systems are removed, and kept out of this hemisphere in the future -- if there is no effort to export aggressive Communist purposes from Cuba -- and if there is no interference from Cuba with our own security, there can be peace in the Caribbean, and that is what this Government wants. In this sense there has always been assurances against invasion, and I am glad to repeat that position today.